

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

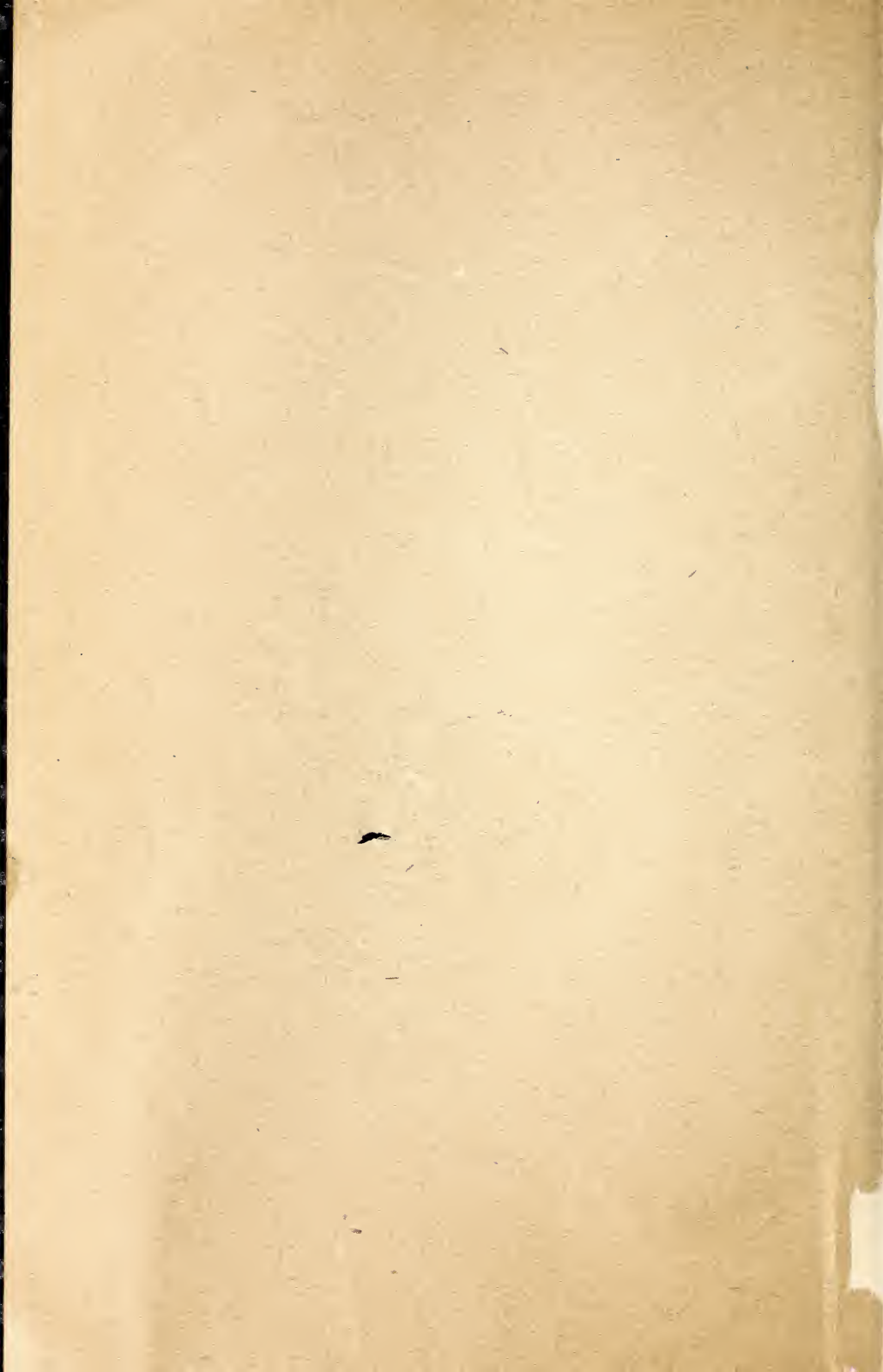
United States Department of Agriculture,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY.

Contribution from the Office of Farm Management,
W. J. SPILLMAN, Chief.

PLAN FOR
HANDLING THE FARM-LABOR
PROBLEM



WASHINGTON
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
1917



United States Department of Agriculture, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY.

Contribution from the Office of Farm Management,
W. J. SPILLMAN, Chief.

PLAN FOR HANDLING THE FARM-LABOR PROBLEM



WASHINGTON
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
1917

OUTLINE OF PLAN.

The plan of operation here outlined is given in generalized form. In case this plan, or a modification of it is adopted, the State man placed in charge of the work should at once proceed to make any changes needed to fit the plan to conditions in the State and then have copies printed sufficient in number to supply the needs of the State. It is not the intention to substitute this for any satisfactory plan already formulated or in operation.

This plan, which is presented for whatever suggestive value it may have, contemplates a State organization, a separate county organization or a representative for each county, and a local organization or representative for each community for dealing with the problem of farm labor. State organizations are assumed to be responsible for the organization or selection of representatives in the counties, and the county organizations for the organization or selection of representatives in the various communities in the county. Each organization is supposed to designate some one individual to be responsible for the details of its work in connection with matters relating to farm labor, and these individuals are herein referred to, respectively, as State man, county man, and community man.

Two important features of the plan are:

1. It provides for ascertaining the needs of every farmer, not only as to the number of additional laborers needed, but as to the time when they are wanted. It will be impossible to shift labor from one locality to another satisfactorily without this information. This is especially important in connection with harvest labor.

2. It avoids the congestion of data in any one office. *In the plan here presented each unit acts as a clearing house for its territory, reporting to the units higher up only surpluses or deficits.* The needs of the farmer thus begin to be met as soon as the plan is put into operation.

SUGGESTED SOURCES OF LABOR.

Special effort should be made to list all available labor in rural and village communities and in schools in such communities, including agricultural schools and colleges wherever located.

Some of the classes amongst which recruits may be found in all rural and village communities are enumerated in the following paragraphs:

There are about 700,000 retired farmers in this country not now occupied. Many of these who are able-bodied undoubtedly will help

in the present emergency. Their knowledge of farming makes them a very important factor.

There are several million boys and young men not now engaged in farm work but who have had more or less farm experience. Such of these as are found in the large cities may be enrolled by the United States Department of Labor. In rural communities, villages, and the smaller towns they should, as far as possible, be enrolled for farm work by the organization outlined in these pages.

In villages and small towns many people who have had farm experience can be spared for farm work during busy seasons on the farm.

Where the shortage of labor is serious and can not otherwise be met, women and girls will doubtless volunteer in large numbers to meet emergencies—in many cases taking the places of men who will thus be released for farm work.

Many school and college authorities have shown a desire to assist by rearranging their schedules and by excusing students for farm work with academic credit.

Recruiting stations report the rejection of numerous applicants for one reason or another. Many of these applicants may be available for farm labor, and this source of labor should not be overlooked.

Nearly everyone takes a vacation at some time during the year. People generally, more especially those who know how to do farm work, may be willing to take their vacations at times when they can be helpful on the farm.

In the matter of exchange labor between farmers, where farmers help each other at certain tasks, such as harvesting, thrashing, haying, etc., it is believed that no particular attempt should be made to record the need or supply of such exchange labor on the blanks, leaving individual farmers to make their own arrangements with their neighbors. However, farmers should be urged to cooperate freely in exchanging labor. Where a farmer has labor which he knows will not be needed at some particular time of the year, either on his own farm or in exchange labor with his neighbors, such labor should be listed for the time it will be available for others.

The Federal Department of Labor has special facilities for obtaining labor from many of the above sources, especially in the larger industrial centers, and from others. Where farm-labor needs can not be met by supplies obtained from rural and village communities and the smaller towns, the Department of Labor will undertake to supply them on definite notice of the number of laborers needed and when and where needed. Such notice should be given as early as possible.

State, county, and community men in this organization should keep in constant touch with local representatives of the employment service of the Department of Labor and utilize their facilities as

fully as may be necessary.¹ It is important, however, that when arrangements have been made for obtaining labor in this manner, the deficit thus met should not be reported as a deficit to the next higher unit in this organization. Thus, if a county man arranges to meet a county deficit wholly with labor supplied by the employment service of the Department of Labor, he should not report the same deficit to his State man.

Since the labor survey herein provided for may take some time other efforts to supply farm labor should not be discouraged. Representatives of this organization should at least work in harmony with other agencies for supplying farm labor.

Certain daily papers in the large cities have listed large numbers of men who desire employment on farms. Many of these men are experienced farm hands. Where such lists are available they should be used.

DETAILS OF THE PLAN.

Those responsible for the organization of farm labor within a State should designate some one person of known ability as an organizer or executive and with an intimate knowledge of farming to have charge of carrying out the details of this plan. Wherever desired the State farm-help specialist representing the United States Department of Agriculture may be utilized in this capacity. Where some one else is in charge of the work, the State farm-help specialist representing this department may be assigned to assist in the work. The plan herewith presented assumes that the State will be divided into subdivisions, each of which represents a single county or convenient group of counties. This outline as here presented assumes the county as the subdivision of the State for dealing with the farm-labor problem. The plan also assumes that in each county there will be some one person responsible to the State man in charge of the work to carry out the details of the plan in his county.

¹ The Department of Labor has branch offices as follows:

Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maine.—1151 Washington Street, Boston, Mass.

New York, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut.—Room 8, U. S. Barge Office, New York, N. Y.

New Jersey.—207 Market Street, Newark, N. J.
Pennsylvania, Delaware, West Virginia.—132 South Third Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

Maryland.—Stewart Building, Baltimore, Md.
Virginia, North Carolina.—119 West Main Street, Norfolk, Va.

Florida, Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina.—Federal Building, Jacksonville, Fla.

Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee.—City Hall, New Orleans, La.

Texas, New Mexico.—American National Insurance Co. Building, Galveston, Tex.

Ohio, Kentucky.—Post Office Building, Cleveland, Ohio.

Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin.—845 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota.—Federal Building, Minneapolis, Minn.

Missouri.—804 Grand Avenue, Kansas City, Mo.
Kansas, Oklahoma, Iowa, Nebraska.—19 Eighth Street, St. Louis, Mo.

Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska, Utah.—355 Federal Building, Denver, Colo.

Montana, Idaho.—Power Building, Helena, Mont.

Washington.—Union and Western Avenues, Seattle, Wash.

Oregon.—Railway Exchange Building, Portland, Oreg.

Northern California, Nevada.—Room 2 United States Appraisers' Building, San Francisco, Cal.

Southern California, Arizona.—Post Office Building, Los Angeles, Cal.

It is presumed that under the State extension director, county demonstrators or agents will, in many of the States, act as county men in this organization. In others the responsibility will probably rest upon a county committee, and the county man in this case would be some one designated by the committee. It is believed that commercial clubs and banks will freely cooperate.

The plan assumes that the county or other primary division of the State will be divided into a convenient number of "communities," each with its community man working under the direction of the county man. The county and community men are assumed to appoint such committees as may be necessary in carrying out the duties devolving upon them.

In counties not organized for the work and having no plans made for immediate organization, a method of procedure such as the following might be adopted: Have the State agency designate an individual in each unorganized county to call a meeting of farmers and other business men at the courthouse or other convenient place, the State agency designating the day and hour of the meeting. This meeting should—

- (1) Designate some suitable individual to be responsible for the work in the county.

- (2) The meeting should also designate some suitable person in each community of the county (perhaps at each market point in the county) to be responsible for the work in the respective communities. Each county and community man should appoint such committees as he will need in carrying on his work.

By the time the meeting occurs, printed copies of the plan of operation should be on hand to distribute to the newly chosen county man and each of the community men.

Each community man, with such assistance as is necessary, proceeds at once to ascertain the labor needs of every farmer in his community, using Form 1 (see p. 11) for this purpose, one blank for each farmer.

In similar manner he uses Form 2 in enrolling every individual volunteering for the agricultural service. Those already engaged in farm labor should be included *only for such times as they will be available for work on other farms*. It should also include those in villages and towns who can devote any portion of the season to farm work.

When Forms 1 and 2 have been filled out, the community man makes such assignments as will adjust local supplies of labor to local needs, using Form 3 for this purpose. When the community man has assigned a laborer to a farmer, it is his duty to notify both the laborer and the farmer of the assignment, giving each of them all the information necessary to bring them together. If he is

unable in this way to supply every farmer, he uses Form 4 in reporting the deficit to his county man. If, on the other hand, he has a surplus of labor available, it is reported to the county man on Form 5.

The community man should send to his county man supplemental reports from time to time when changes in the labor situation demand further adjustment which he can not meet with the supplies of labor available to him or when a surplus of labor develops which he can not use.

The county man, as Forms 4 and 5 come in, uses Form 6 for making transfers of labor from one community to another. In making such transfers the county man should proceed as follows:

- (1) Notify the community man furnishing the surplus as to the number of men to be sent, the name and address of the community man to whom they are to report, and the date when they should report.

- (2) Notify the community man to whom the men are to be sent as to the number to be sent, where they are from, and when they will arrive. The community man will notify the farmers when and where to meet the men.

When the county man has thus adjusted his communities, he will usually have a surplus or a deficit for the county as a whole. If there is a deficit he reports it to the State man on Form 7; if a surplus, on Form 8. The county man should similarly send supplemental reports to the State man as occasion demands.

As Forms 7 and 8 come into the office of the State man he uses Form 9 in recording transfers of surpluses to meet deficits as between counties. In transferring men from one county to another the State man should proceed as follows:

1. Ascertain from the county man needing labor the points where the laborers should report, the name of the community leaders to whom they should report, and how many should report at each point.

2. Notify the county man furnishing the labor as to the points to which to send men, when to send them, how many to send to each point, and the name of the community leader to whom they are to report. The county man notifies his community men when, where, and how many men to send. The community man notifies the individuals to be sent.

3. Notify the county man receiving the labor as to the number of men being sent to each point and when they will arrive. The county man notifies the community men when and where the laborers will arrive and the number coming. The community man notifies the farmers when and where to meet the laborers.

If a deficit is found for the State as a whole, the details of the deficit should be reported to the Office of Farm Management, by counties, on Form 10. If a surplus, report on Form 11. If some of the

counties having a surplus and some of those having a deficit are so far distant as to render it more practicable to meet the situation by transfers to or from adjacent States, such surpluses and deficits should both be reported. The Office of Farm Management will act as a clearing house between the States.

NOTES.

Transportation.—The transportation of labor from point to point must be taken care of locally. In some cases doubtless concessions from the railroads will be secured. For transporting labor short distances local people will doubtless make autos available.

Volunteers from other States.—If offers of service come from individuals or groups in other States enroll them the same as those volunteering in the State *if they are needed*. Notify them of action taken.

Printing blanks.—Each State should print its own supply of blanks. Much time can be saved by having each county print Forms 1 and 2 sufficient for its needs.

Government agencies.—The survey here outlined is suggested by the United States Department of Agriculture cooperating with the United States Department of Labor.

Wages.—The farmer who pays the wages and the laborer who works for them determine what the wages are to be.

Help in the farm home.—The need and the supply of help for the farm home may be handled along with and on the same blank as that for ordinary farm labor.

Expenses.—The department will where necessary pay the salary and expenses of a representative in each State.

Forms 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are suggested for the use of community men in:

1. Getting records from farmers of help wanted.
2. Getting lists of extra help available for farm work.
3. Assigning extra farm help to farmers.
4. Reporting to the county man community shortages of farm help wanted.
5. Reporting to county men surpluses of extra farm help available for distribution elsewhere.

Forms 6, 7, and 8 are suggested for the use of county men in:

6. Assigning extra helpers to community men.
7. Reporting to the State man shortages of farm help wanted in the counties.
8. Reporting to the State man county surpluses of extra help available for distribution in other counties.

Forms 9, 10, and 11. Suggested for the use of the State man in:

9. Assigning extra farm help to counties reporting a shortage.
10. Reporting by counties shortages of farm help wanted in the States.

11. Reporting by counties surpluses of extra farm help available for distribution in other States.

The following quantities of these form labor blanks will be needed for carrying out the work as planned:

Form 1. Sufficient for every farmer.

Form 2. One fourth as many as of Form 1.

Forms 3 to 5. 100 for each community man.

Form 6 to 8. 100 for each county man.

Forms 9 to 11. 100 for each State man.

It is suggested that these forms be printed on sheets about 8 by 10½ inches in size. To expedite matters, it is suggested that forms 1 and 2, which are necessary in beginning the work, be printed by the county.

Farm help Form 2.—Extra help available for farm work.

.....
(Name of State agency handling the work.)

In cooperation with

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

(Community man.)

Date

Mr. P. O. County State

EXTRA HELP AVAILABLE FOR FARM WORK.

Name and address.	Man, woman, boy, girl. ¹	When and how long available?	What work can you do?	What wages do you expect?	How far will you go for work?	Check those assigned here.
Name:						
Address:						
Name:						
Address:						
Name:						
Address:						
Name:						
Address:						
Name:						
Address:						
Name:						
Address:						
Name:						
Address:						
Name:						
Address:						

¹ Those 16 and over should be listed as men and women.

This form to be filled out by the community man and retained by him until the end of the season, when he should send it to the county man.



(Name of State agency handling the work.)

In cooperation with

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

(County man.)

Date

Mr. P. O. County State

[illegible]

County man should check up community men's reports on Forms 4 and 5 and record his assignment on this form (Form 6).

(Name of State agency handling the work.)

In cooperation with

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

(County man.)

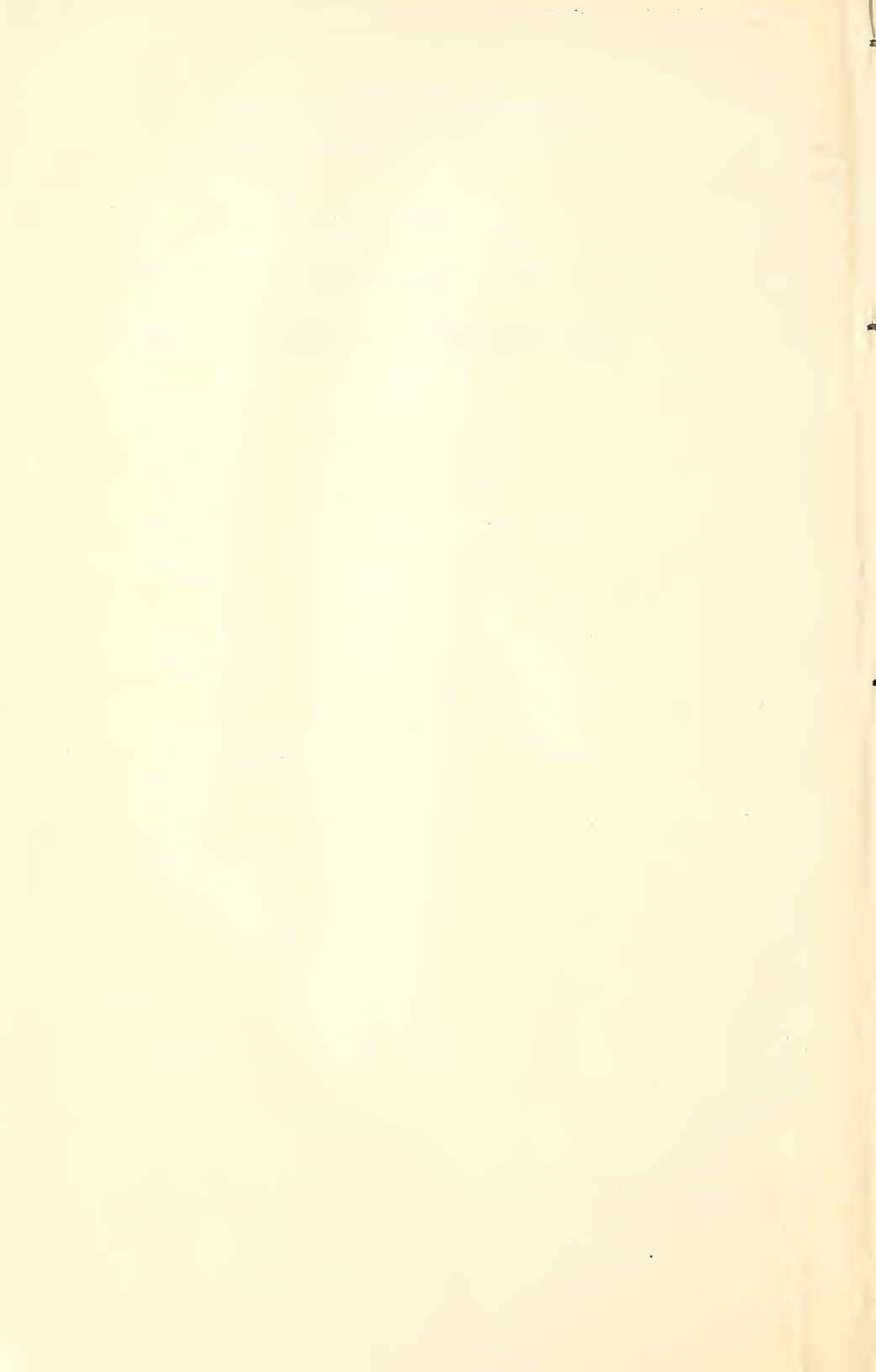
Date

Mr. P. O. County State

EXTRA FARM HELP IN COUNTY AVAILABLE FOR DISTRIBUTION IN OTHER
COUNTIES.

[illegible]

County man should check up and balance his community men's records on Forms 4 and 5 and record on this sheet any balances of extra help available for distribution to other counties and send it immediately to State farm help specialist.



(Name of State agency handling the work.)

In cooperation with

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

(State man.)

Date

Mr. P. O. County State

FARM HELP WANTED BY.....COUNTY, STATE OF.....OVER AND ABOVE LOCAL
SUPPLY AVAILABLE.

[illegible]

The State farm help specialist should check off and balance the county mens' records on Form 7 and 8 and record on this sheet the net shortage by counties for the State, if any, and send it immediately to the Office of Farm Management, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

